

not always satisfactory or normal, and then one or other of these pre-genital zones may lend the chief colour to the sexual life as a whole, and to the attributes of the ego.

After the very earliest days, when once the super-ego has become established within the psyche, the child's mental life thus always presents a complex psychic situation, involving the interplay of three *relatively* independent factors, (a) the wish-self of the child (or *id*) ; (b) the super-ego, or parent-self within the child, restraining his wishes and returning upon him those primitive impulses of aggression which the wish-self seeks to expend upon the external world, and in as crude and primitive and phantastic a form; and (c) the ego, which is the representative within the psyche of the real external world in its relational form. In normal development this factor grows in strength and endurance and embracingness. The wish-self remains the same, the super-ego is barely altered in type or intensity, but neither of these two latter factors has ever again the same dominance over the child's mental life, since the ego is an expanding function all through the years of development to maturity (unless of course its growth be inhibited and arrested by some special cause).

Now the work of the child analysts in recent years has revealed to us the great variety of quite concrete phantasies, most of them unconscious, which the child experiences in his inner life, about his relations to his parents and to other adults and children: what he might do to them and they might do to him. These phantasies, which on first hearing seem so extraordinarily phantastic that it is hard to believe they can be present in the mind of a little child, become much more intelligible if one relates them to the child's actual sensory experiences, and remembers always

that these  
primitive sensory experiences must fill his  
world. As an  
example, I might take the wish of the little child,  
which has  
been shown over and over again in the analysis  
of young  
children as well as the phantasies of adults, to  
suck and scoop  
out first the mother's breast and then later the  
inside of her  
body. These oral sadistic phantasies are of " a  
quite definite  
character, seeming to form a link between the  
oral-sucking  
and oral-biting stages."<sup>1</sup> Now at first sight it  
might seem  
an impossible notion, that a little child should  
wish to get  
possession of the contents of his mother's  
breast and body

<sup>1</sup> Melanie Klein, *The Psycho-Analysis of Children*, p.  
185.